(b) if so, the reasons for delay in the matter on the part of Government and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Techno Commercial bid of tender of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) for 45.5 million GSM based network was opened on 12.06.2006 and financial bid was opened on 09.10.2006. One of the bidders found techno commercially non-compliant had approached Hon'ble High Court against the decision of BSNL. The case has now been withdrawn by them on 16.04.2007. The evaluation process has now been concluded.

Allocation benefits to Scs and fits

4599. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that Rs. 10.60 crores were allocated to the Ministry for the year 2006-07 to spend on programmes with at least 20 per cent allocation benefits to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;

the programmes which have been undertaken .by his Ministry for 2006-07 with details of budget, funds utilized.quantitative and qualitative benefits accrued to the empowerment and welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, therefrom, State-wise;and

the programmes to be undertaken for 2007-08 with 20 per cent at least allocation benefits out of the Budget allocation of Rs.30 crores with details thereof and the amount likely to be spent thereon, benefits to be accrued to these sections, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD) (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of the programmes approved by Department of

Information and Technology under the Plan Scheme 'IT for Masses' for development of SCs/STs during 2006-07 are as under:

Sl. No.	Name of the Programme	Approved amount of Grant-in-aid
1.	Training of SC/ST Women in North-East in North-East (Sikkim)	Rs. 19.00 lacs Rs.
2.	Professional IT & Electronics Course for Upliftment of ST Youth & Women in Mizoram	18.00 iacs

The actual benefits attributable to these programmes will be assessed in due course.

(c) Under 'IT for Masses' programme budgetary allocation of Rs. 40.00 lacs exists for 2007-08. Suitable programmes for development of SCs/STs will be considered during 2007-08.

Exclusive privilege of conveying by post

4600. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that Government had decided to keep exclusive privilege of conveying by post from one place to other, all articles weighing upto 150 gm:

whether it is also a fact that Government had asked the private players to charge five times more for unregistered mails and 2.5 times in case of express mails compared to Government tariff; and

if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) The existing Section *4* of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898 bestows exclusive privilege on the Central Government to handle letters with some exceptions. There is a proposal to amend the Indian Post Office Act, 1898. However, the proposed amendments are yet to be finalized.